Variance Request / Project Narrative

Tibbetts Crossing, Issaquah

Site Description:
The site is located within the City of Issaquah, within the vicinity of the Tibbetts Creek shoreline and floodplain. The site contains portions of several critical areas: Tibbetts Creek, a known fish-bearing stream, enters the site from the South and flows north through the center of the property. A tributary (Stream B) to Tibbetts Creek enters the site from the West and flows east along the southern border. Three wetland areas were delineated in the west side property. Wetland A is a small wetland adjacent to SR900. Wetland B is located northeast corner of the property. Wetland C is adjacent to Tibbetts Creek, on the north end of the property.

Proposed Project:
The Applicant proposes to develop a 20 lot single family residential community with associated infrastructure and stormwater elements. A total of 16 lots would be located on the West side of Tibbetts Crossing, and a total of 4 lots would be located on the east side. A proposed bridge across Tibbetts Creek would provide access to the eastern lots, as well as provide public trail access to the proposed future Squak Mountain regional trail system, located directly east of the project boundary.

Project need:
A Variance is requested to accommodate a portion of the proposed East Detention Vault that extends into the Tibbetts Creek buffer setback. The vault is necessary to collect and treat stormwater runoff from the proposed bridge crossing. The proposed impacts to the buffer have been minimized to the greatest extent feasible by locating the entire detention vault within the proposed road crossing approach, which was previously approved by the Preliminary Plat (PP18-00002).

Due to a series of site and vicinity constraints, access to the eastern side of the creek requires a bridge crossing. The location of this crossing was determined to provide the least amount of impact to surrounding creek and wetland buffers. A flood Hazard Permit (FLH20-00002) was issued by Issaquah on 8/14/20 to permit construction of the bridge and associated roads and utilities. The bridge abutment structures are located outside of the 100-year designated flood plain of Tibbetts Creek. Due to the lower elevation of the bridge (relative to the site), it is not feasible to collect and treat the stormwater that will be generated by the impervious surfaces of the road and bridge without locating a portion of the vault beyond the outer 25% of the existing stream buffer. To further reduce impacts to the buffer, eliminating a required 5ft setback for the vault along the north tract line is requested with this application.

Proposed project impacts:
The entire structure of the proposed vault would be located within the proposed roadway. The roadway is designed to be elevated above existing grade with reinforced retaining walls on each side. A portion of the Northern vault wall would serve as the retaining wall in that location, and is located on the tract

property line. This position is necessary to provide adequate separation for utilities that will service the east side of the project. Required water quality treatment for the proposed vault would be provided by a separate water quality manhole located entirely on lot 16. The outfall drain for the vault would extend out from this manhole, and terminate in a level spreader located on the northeast corner of lot 16, and within the outer 25% buffer of both Wetland C and Tibbetts Creek.

The road, bridge, vault and outfall have all been designed to minimize the disturbance within the stream buffer. No impacts to the stream channel or 100-year floodplain will occur.

Approval Criteria

1) **The Variance is in harmony with the purpose and intent of the relevant City ordinances and the Comprehensive Plan;**
   The requested variance allows for the construction of a detention vault that would be located entirely within the footprint of the roadway that was previously approved by the Preliminary Plat, and produces no new impact to the wetland buffer. The proposed stormwater outfall has been relocated to the outer 25% of the wetland buffer, as required by City Ordinances and the Comprehensive Plan.
2) **The variance shall not constitute a grant of special privilege which would be inconsistent with the permitted uses, or other properties in the vicinity and zone in which the subject property is located;**
   Critical area buffers throughout the site have been retained at their full standard width to the greatest extent feasible. Modifications to the critical area buffers in any form have been restricted to the minimum necessary to produce a complete construction footprint to create an economically viable project. The existing stream crossing impact was approved by the City of Issaquah as part of the Preliminary Plat, and is the minimum necessary size in compliance with IMC.18.10.775. A mitigation plan has been developed to ensure critical area functions and values are maintained. The proposed vault is located entirely within the proposed stream crossing, and therefore will not result in diminishment of the functions or values of the stream buffer. The variance will not result in a grant of special privilege, and is consistent with other properties in the vicinity and zone where this property is located.
3) **That such variance is necessary, because of special circumstances relating to the size, shape, topography, location or surrounds of the subject property, to provide it with use rights and privileges permitted to other properties in the vicinity, located in the same zone as the subject property and developed under the same land use regulations as the subject property requesting the variance;**
   The site has multiple constraints that make development challenging, including wetlands, streams and associated buffers. The locations of these elements have guided the design of the proposed project. The combination of all of these elements in addition to the relative elevation of the stream crossing has determined the location for the proposed storm vault. The current location for the bridge crossing will produce the least amount of impact to critical areas, and the

construction of the vault will not create any additional impacts due to its location within the bridge crossing.

4) **That the granting of such variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity and zone which the subject property is situated;**
   The requested variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or property in the vicinity and zone of the site. The variance will allow for the required access road for the eastern lots, as well as provide a public pedestrian connection for the proposed trail to the future Squak Mountain regional trail system.
5) **That alternative development concepts that comply with the Code provisions to which the variance is requested have been evaluated, and that undue hardship would result if the strict adherence to the Code provisions are required;**
   Alternative locations of the access road and were evaluated, but were discarded because they would have resulted in greater impacts to critical areas and their buffers. The access road by design necessitates the location of the storm vault, due to existing and proposed site elevations and the need to detain and treat runoff. While code permits construction of the bridge and approach, it does not permit construction of the storm vault (The vault is a secondary structure, and built strictly for storage and water quality. No discharge of treated stormwater would occur within the inner 75% of the stream buffer).
6) **The variance is the minimum amount that will comply with the criteria listed above and the minimum necessary to accommodate the permitted uses proposed by the application, and the scale of the use shall be reduced as necessary to meet this requirement; and**
   The road right of way is the minimum required to construct an access road that meets the requirements of the City of Issaquah. Consequently, the detention vault is also the minimum size necessary to achieve required storage and treatment of stormwater runoff generated by the roadway. Applicant has utilized BMP LID stormwater designs throughout the site to minimize requirements for detention and treatment of stormwater, and minimize impacts to the stream and buffer.
7) **Then need for the variance is not the result of actions of the applicant or property owner.**
   The actions of the Applicant and property owner have had no bearing on the location of the storm vault.

Compensation

An additional 301sf of additional stream buffer will be added to replace the stream buffer lost by construction of the bridge and approach. An additional 2,076sf of buffer mitigation will be added to compensate for the temporary construction related impacts for the bridge and approach. No added buffer impacts will occur from the construction of the proposed detention vault within the approach.